Comic Shop News

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America's weekly comics newsletter!

Vol. 1 No. 1, July 1-10

Chaykin back on Flagg

Howard Chaykin will be returning to ***American Flagg*** later this summer; at first, he will be coming back to the book just as a plotter, but by the end of the year, Chaykin will be producing an all-new American Flagg series call ***Howard Chaykin's American Flagg***, which will begin numbering with #1.

The July issue, #47, will be the first part of a four-part storyline plotted by Howard Chaykin; the first two parts of this four-parter will be illustrated by Paul Smith, and the last two parts will be illustrated by Mike Vosburg. After that, December should herald the release of the all-new title, written by Chaykin and illustrated by Chaykin and his studio of artists—the same people who worked with him on ***Time²***, the graphic novel First released last year.

"We're very excited to have Howard returning," said Rick Obadiah, publisher of First Comics. "Flagg has always been Howard's book, and the fans really liked Howard's work on it. We're glad it's worked out that he can come back to the book again."

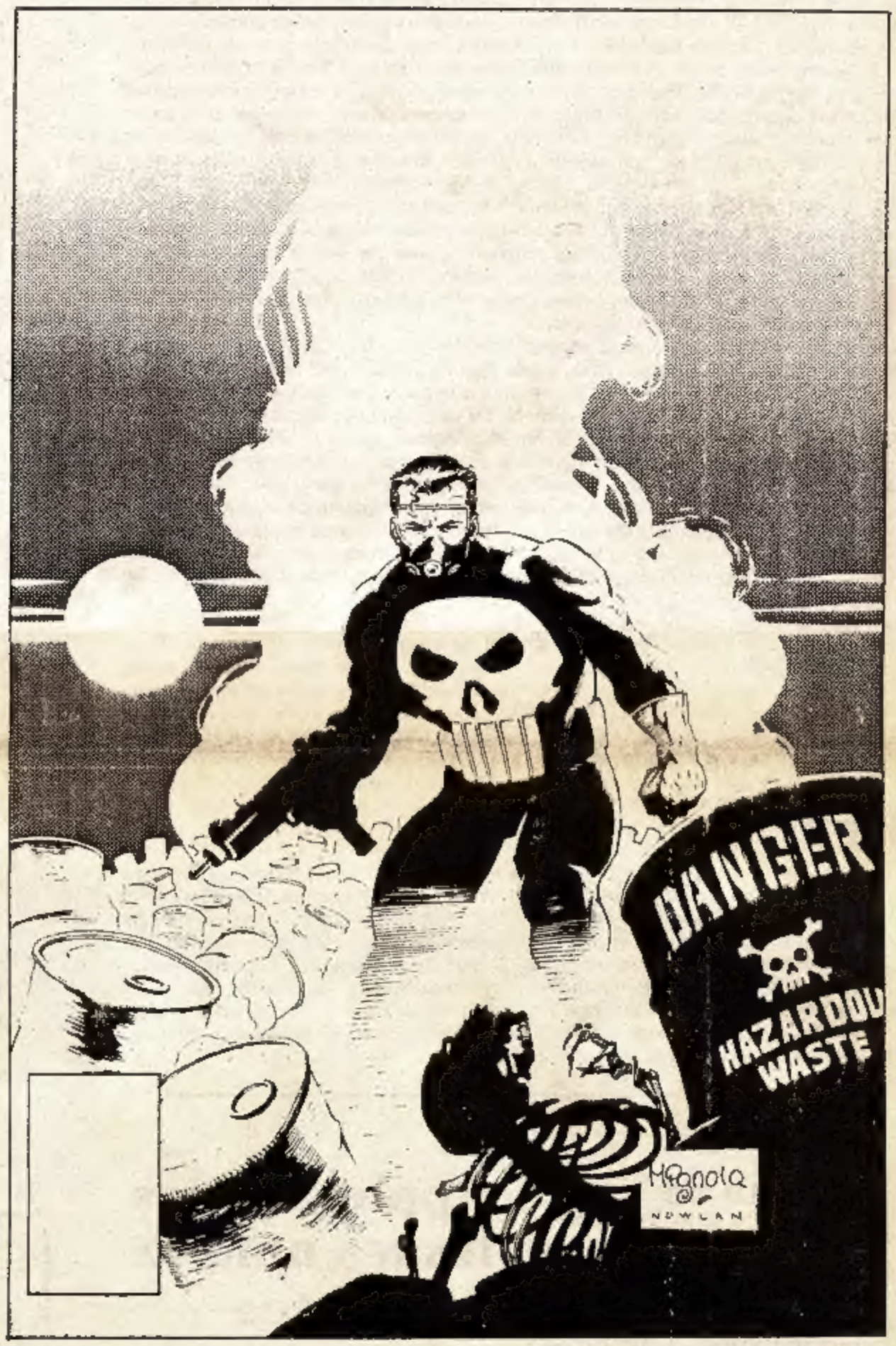
Chaykin should keep himself very busy; in addition to the new series for First and the upcoming Blackhawk prestige-format series for DC, he also has a new ***Time²*** graphic novel. "Satisfaction of Black Maria," due out in September.

First has several other items upcoming in addition to the new Chaykin Flagg series; early July will see the debut of a new series, ***Psychoblast***. In August, there will be a second Elric graphic novel, ***Sailor on the Seas of Fate***, reprinting the limited series in a 208-page volume for $14.95. That month, Steve Rude also returns to ***Nexus***. September brings ***Elric Corum's*** new art team, Jackson Guice and Kelly Jones. Finally, October will see the release of the third Oz graphic novel.

Simonson takes over Avengers

Walt Simonson who recently left the writing chores on Marvel's Thor, has found a new title on which he can leave his mark: he'll begin writing ***Avengers*** with issue #290, and has storylines in mind to build up to the 300th issue, which he hopes will be double-sized.

Simonson also says that the current line-up for the Avengers will be changed in the next six months, but he didn't want to reveal the new line-up at this point.



This is the cover for the *Punisher* #6. © 1987 Marvel Comics

Benefit Portfolio features 14 top comic artists

A group of 14 top comics artists have banded together to help a comic book store and its manager fight charges of "intent to disseminate obscene materials" in Lansing, Illinois.

The artists have formed a non-profit organization called The Comic Book Legal Defense Fund and plan to issue a portfolio of a dozen plates in **August**.

The artists involved in the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund are: **Sergio Aragones, Steve Bissette, Bob Burden, Richard Corben, Robert Crumb, Howard Cruse, Will Eisner, Denis Kitchen, Frank Miller, Mitch O'Connell** and **Hilary Barta, Donald Simpson, Eric Vincent, and Reed Waller.**

There will be 1500 portfolios made, and 250 of them will be signed and numbered by each artist. The other portfolios will be numbered from 251 to 1500. The unsigned portfolio will retail for $20; the signed and numbered for $50. The art used for this special effort will then be sold through a mail auction.

What is the reason for this extraordinary effort? According to Denis Kitchen, publisher, "On December 10, 1986, six Lansing, Illinois police officers entered "Friendly Frank's Comic Shop," closed it, and arrested the manager, Michael Correa, for displaying the books ***Omaha, the Cat Dancer 1-3; Bizarre Sex 5; Weirdo 17 and 18; Heavy Metal; Murder;*** and ***The Bodyssey***.The store's owner, Frank Mangiarancina, who is also a distributor, said one of the arresting officers verbally objected to a ***Wonder Woman*** poster and other material generally regarded as being for all ages. He quoted another officer as saying the material conveyed a "satanic influence."

During the last week in May, the books ***Elektra: Assassin; Swords of the Swashbuckler; Love & Rockets 16; Ms. Tree 34; Elfquest: Siege on Blue Mountain 2; Chronicles of Corum;*** and ***Ex-Mutants*** were added to the prosecuted list. The store itself reopened on December 15, but the case is proceeding in court. If convicted, Correa faces a $1,000 fine and a year in jail as possible sentences.

Kitchen continues, "The Comic Book Legal Defense Fund" feels that this case is an obvious example of legal harassment, and if nothing is done to combat it, **all** portions of the industry will be adversely affected. The list of "objectionable books" is wide-ranging and includes works published by Marvel, Kitchen Sink, Renegade, Last Gasp, Fantagraphics, and others. The fund proceeds will go toward defraying the legal expenses of Correa and Mangiaracina."

If any funds remain from the portfolio sale and auction, the funds will be placed in an interest-bearing account, and the contributing artists will have an equal vote in determining what is done with the balance. The consensus seems to be that any balance should remain untouched until or if a similar censorship or harassment situation occurs again.

Just what IS Comic Shop News?

Welcome to the first issue of ***Comic Shop News***, the first national newsletter for customers of comic shops and other direct outlets. ***CSN*** will arrive each week with the new comics and should be helpful in sorting through the ever-growing comics market. According to the ***Comics Buyer's Guide*** if you bought one copy of every comic published last November the total cost would have been around $300. In May the cost has risen to a whopping $700! Obviously, no one (or store) can afford to carry **everything** published, and because the direct market is so accessable right now there are a lot of not-very-good comics coming out these days. But, with so much product available, we think that this is the true "Golden Age" of comics. In terms of variety, sophistication and quality, the best work in the history of the medium is being produced today. We've been reading and collecting comics for over two decades and the best of comics has never been better (of course the worst has never been worse, but that comes with the territory.). The main purpose of ***Comic Shop News*** is to help you sort through the mountain of comics available from the dozens of companies publishing; to alert you to some of the worthwhile comics that seem so often to have come and gone before word about them gets out.

Comic Shop News is a unique publication in several ways. This is a national newsletter, not a newspaper or magazine. While we do plan on bringing you the latest news from the comics field, because of our size we cannot hope to give you the kind of indepth news and features of the ***Comic Buyer's Guide***. Or the other comics magazines like the ***Comics Journal, Amazing Heroes, Comics Interview,*** or ***Four Color Magazine***. Each of these are quality publications that offer any reader news and insights into the comics scene. ***Comic Shop News*** serves a different purpose. While you pay nothing for each issue of ***CSN***, your retailer is paying for the copies given away each week. Without the support of these retailers and the distributors ***CSN*** would not be possible. We are very grateful for their support and encourage you to let your retailer know if you enjoy ***CSN***. Maybe you could even buy an extra funnybook this week, just to demonstrate that your heart's in the right place.

Because of the variance in shipping time to different parts of the country, each weekly issue will cover books that might not necessarily come in the same week as that issue of ***CSN***. Also, there is the same variance in shipping times on many comics which are printed across the U.S. and Canada. So the comics discussed in each issue may have come into your shop last week, or may not come in for another two or three weeks. We just thought we'd warn you. Your retailer can generally let you know when something specific is due in.

We'd like to take a moment to tell you about ourselves just so you'll know that these guys recommending all this stuff to you aren't just a couple of yazoos off the street. Cliff and Ward co-own Dr. No's Comics in the Atlanta area which has been in business since 1978. Cliff writes regularly for the ***Comics Buyer's Guide*** and is an advisor to their price guide. He also writes for ***Retail Express***. He also writes ***After Apocalypse*** and knows the name of every pre-hero Marvel monster. Ward has been writing ***"Trufan Adventures,"*** a humor strip for the ***Comics Buyer's Guide*** since 1981. Along with artist Charlie Williams he wrote and published two issues of ***Trufan Adventures Theatre*** and five issues of ***Boffo Laffs*** which featured more "Trufan Adventures" (which continues on a semi-regular feature in ***CBG***) and ***""Ultragay & Joe Power"*** which begins as a regular feature in ***Comic Shop News***.

That should about do it. We look forward to coming to you each week and while we don't plan a regular letter column, we'd love to hear any suggestions or thoughts you have. Happy collecting!

Simonson takes over Avengers

Walt Simonson who recently left the writing chores on Marvel's Thor, has found a new title on which he can leave his mark: he'll begin writing ***Avengers*** with issue #290, and has storylines in mind to build up to the 300th issue, which he hopes will be double-sized.

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Golden Age Classic Returns

Chuck Dixon and Tom Lyle, the creative team on the ever-popular ***Skywolf*** back-up in ***Airboy***, are at it again, this time taking the power belt from an obscure Golden Age super-soldier and passing it on to a black teenager in the heart of Baltimore. When ***Strike!*** makes its debut in August, fans who have been clamoring for a "straight" superhero saga from Dixon will finally get their wish.

"I've always wanted to play with the genre," says Dixon, "but up 'til now I never had a project that interested me enough. The whole idea of ***Sgt. Strike*** piqued my interest. I'm going to try to take the all-out action of my adventure stories and add in the classic superhero elements."

"Well, if that's what he's trying to do," laughs editor Fred Burke, "then he's certainly succeeding! Some of the fight sequences in ***Strike!*** #3 make Miracleman almost look like a pussycat."

"Basically," says Dixon, ***"Strike!*** is about a present day teenager who finds the costume of a Golden Age superhero in his mom's attic. Issue #1 will tell the story of the Golden Age Sgt. Strike's origin. Continuing issues will show Dennis Foreman, the new Strike, and how he copes with his newfound powers."

Dixon explains that the original Sgt. Strike was published by Happy Comics, a division of the Jolly Farmer Cereal Co. in Kansas City, Kansas. A creation of Grant Clardy, whose father owned Jolly Farmer, ***Sgt. Strike*** was the lead character in ***All-Thrill Comics***. The comic, says Dixon, is "one of the rarest of the Golden Age collectibles, only distributed in the Midwest." Golden Age stories of ***Sgt. Strike*** will begin appearing in the back-up slot of issue #2 of the monthly title.

"I've decided," says Dixon, "that for the inner continuity of ***Strike!***, the old stories were merely legends that sprang up around the **real** exploits of Sgt. Strike. I would like to represent some of these Golden Age stories from a contemporary standpoint and show how they 'really' happened. For example, the giant smaurai in the second ***All-Thrill*** story was in 'reality' an early attempt by the Japanese military to create a war-robot."

Dixon speaks highly of his collaborator Tom Lyle. "Tom brings a grittiness to a normally slick genre. His artwork has a basis in reality, and his characters have one foot on the ground. I think he'll be a fan favorite before much longer."

The first pulse-pounding issue of the monthly, colour, Baxter ***Strike!*** ships August 11 and retails for $1.75.

Marvel to reprint classics in hardcover

Marvel Comics plans to offer deluxe hardcover reprints of the first ten issues of ***Fantastic Four***, ***Spider-man***, and ***X-Men***, beginning in October of this year. New Marvel Editor-in-Chief Tom DeFalco is the moving force behind this plan to offer quality reprints of the most valuable Marvel Comics for a new audience.

DeFalco is a collector himself, and has valued the EC and Barks hardcover collections as being the best possible way to save some of the older classic comics. At presstime, it hasn't been said whether the Marvel books will be done in the same oversized format, whether they will be in black-and-white or in color, or what the price will be. Since Marvel does not have the original artwork on most of these books, and some of the original photostats are also in less-than-perfect shape, Marvel will have to do some restoration work on the pages before the books can be released, it is assumed.

TMNT to be syndicated animated series?

Eastman and Laird are negotiating for a syndicated cartoon series for their ***Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles***, according to informed sources. This series will also possibly tie in to a toy line and a kid's comics adaptation of the TMNT characters. When contacted, Kevin Eastman confirmed that negotiations are underway, "but no contracts have been signed, so I really can't say anything. I would hate to ruin this deal by telling too much about it prematurely. We're anxious to tell everyone about it, in detail, just as soon as the contracts are signed." Eastman did add that TMNT #11 has been completed and should ship in the next few weeks. Also, the second color graphic novel from First is due next month, and the all-new ***Tales of the Turtles*** is due for release very soon.

Apple Comics issues unique guarantee

"Buy any Apple Comic and if you don't like it, send it to us and we'll exchange it for another Apple comic for free!" says Mike Catron, editor. "If you don't like that comic, send it back and we'll replace it again!" This unique guarantee that Apple is offering will get more readers to try Apple titles, Catron hopes. Currently, the company offers such titles as ***Elfquest: Siege at Blue Mountain, Thundersword, Unicorn Isle, Myth Conceptions, Fanta Sci, Blood of Dracula,*** and ***Viet Nam Journal***. In fact, according to Catron, the guarantee goes even further: "Send us any comic from any **other** company, and we'll exchange it for an Apple comic. In fact, send us a copy of **Comic Shop News** and we'll even exchange it for an Apple comic!"

Comic Shop News

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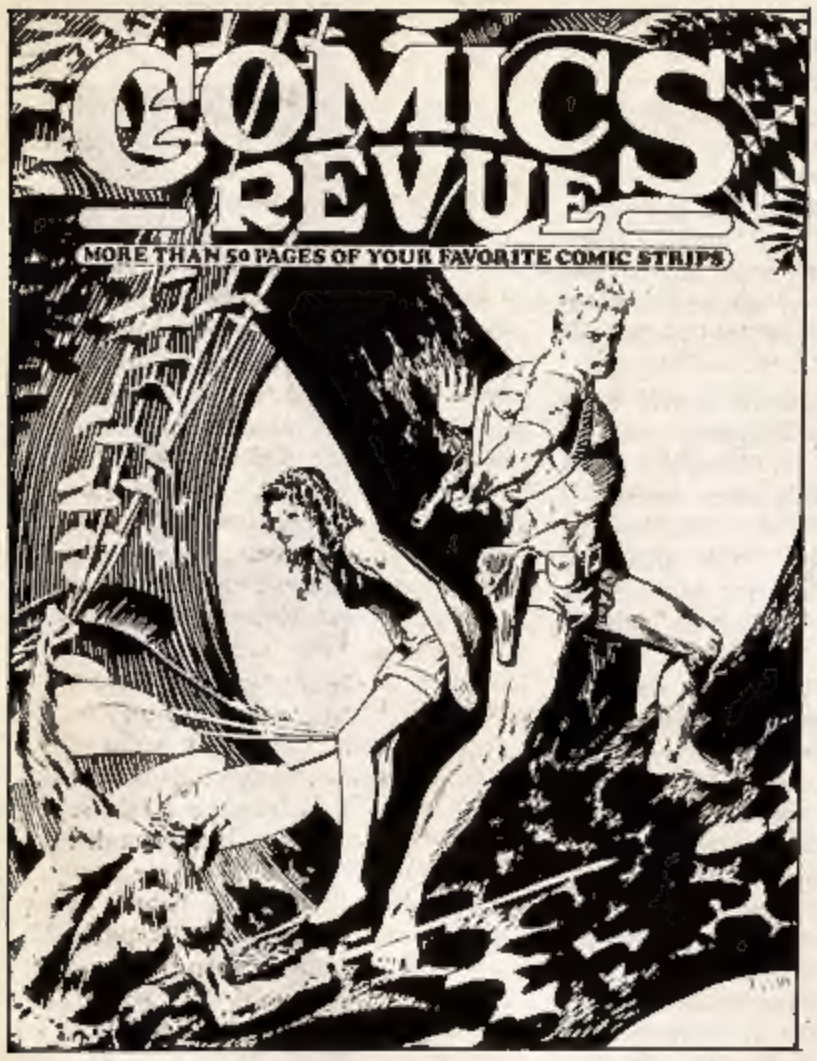

Tom Yeates draws Flash Gordon cover for Comics Revue

Comics Revue #20 features an original Flash Gordon cover by Tom Yeates illustrating "Flash Gordon and the Gorilla Men of Mongo," a complete story by Dan Berry which leads off the issue. Tom Yeates has long been an admirer of Alex Raymond, and was delighted to be able to draw Alex Raymond's most famous character for ***Comics Revue***. The Gorilla Men of Mongo were created by Raymond in the ***Flash Gordon*** Sunday page in 1937, and inhabit Prince Barin's Forest Kingdom on the planet Mongo.

Also appearing in ***Comics Revue #20***; ***Bloom County*** by Pulitzer Prize winner Berke Breathed, ***Steve Canyon*** by Milton Caniff, and ***The Amazing Spider-man*** by Stan Lee. ***Comics Revue*** is the only magazine which regularly publishes recent comic strip stories in their entirity.

Every issue of ***Comics Revue*** contains more than fifty pages of comics. Regular features include ***Secret Agent Corrigan*** by famed E.C. artist Georgia Evens, ***Lotigo*** by Stan Lynde, ***Grandma Alley*** by Dick Moores, and ***Hagar the Horrible*** by Dic Browne.

Comics Revue editor Anthony Tollin, unhappy with the small size of todays comic strips, now enlarges all of the current strips, so that they appear in ***Comics Revue*** larger than they are published in newspapers.

This summer will see the publication of the first Comics Revue Annual.

The Sisterhood of steel returns

Eclipse Comics and Moonfire Productions are proud to announce the co-publication of ***The Sisterhood of Steel Graphic Novel*** entitled "Boronwe: Daughter of Death." The 72-page book is due for release in July in both softcover and hardcover editions, as well as a signed and numbered limited edition hardcover.

Moonfire Productions is the graphic arts team of Christy Marx and Peter Ledger. The husband-wife team has also produced for Eclipse the 3-part historical fantasy adventure "Carlos McLlyr the Californio," which appeared in ***Eclipse Monthly #6, #7*** and ***#8***; and the science fiction parody "The Monster of Planet Og" for ***Alien Encounters #2.***

Marx is the creator and writer of ***The Sisterhood of Steel***, which first saw print from Epic Comics. She says "The graphic novel will pick up where the 8-issue mini-series published by Epic left off. It takes place shortly after the time of Boronwe's trail. Greyan, the Priestess of Swords, invites her to join the Daughters of Death, the secretive assassins of The Sisterhood. Boronwe has to make the most significant decision of her life: she can take her chances in the field, knowing that Vandalis, the ex-Princess of Swords, would become her commander and has sworn to see her die; or she can become a Daughter of Death, forever hidden behind a hood, walking in darkness and shadow.

"I had a huge number of readers ask me to follow up on the fate of the Girl-in-the-Box, so I've included her entire story and given her a name - Ferin. There's more about the true nature of Prince O'Mah and disturbing events in Orange-Phyrus. This is not a story for the faint-hearted, so be warned."

Although the novel does spring from previous events, Marx is taking care to make it equally accessible to the new reader. "I plan for this to be only the first in a long line of such novels," adds Marx.

All illustration on the graphic novel is being done by Peter Ledger. His inks are specifically designed to enhance his painting technique which he describes as "a return to the classic watercolor illustration style of the 20s and 30s; that bright, but dusty Mediterranean ambience of sun, shadow, white-washed walls, olives and cypress, terra-cotta tile rooves, and the deep turquoise of the sea." Ledger continues, "I'm also focusing on the heraldic aspects of the sisterhood, which adds splashes of intense color to this sun-washed background."

"Fans of Mike Vosburg's art from the original series will not be disappointed," Marx promises. "Peter is doing a phenomenal job, adding his enormous knowledge of life in the ancient world to the look of the Sisterhood's world. Peter has always been deeply involved in Greek and Roman history and it really shows up here. He pays attention to every detail, from the straps on the scabbards to the design of a warship. He's a fanatic about accuracy. The book will have a richness of texture and a sense of reality rarely seen anywhere else."

The frontispiece of the book is a double-page aerial overview of the island-fortress of Ildana in which Marx and Ledger have worked out the precise layout of the entire Sisterhood complex. Ledger, as a young man, spent years as a geological surveyor in the vast outback of Australia and was thus able to create a map which not only looks good, but is technically correct as well.

"We went back through the first eight books," Marks says, "and worked out the placement of key buildings and events, right down to the place where Boronwe and Dindra had their infamous chicken-coup fight. Readers will even be able to locate specific buildings, like the Houses of Gold and Silver, and the tower in which Boronwe was held during her trial."

To further enhance the look of the graphic novel, Ledger has developed an entirely new and unique art technique for high quality laser-scan reporduction. He first experimented with the technique when he was doing the "Carlos McLlyr" series. He has since continued to refine it in two stories recently done for ***Alien Encounters***. One story appeared in AE # 11 and the second is scheduled for AE # *13* due out in July.

Ledger and Eclipse Editor-in-Chief Catherine Yronwode are selecting a paper stock from a range of top-grade papers not normally used in graphic novels and Ledger will personally oversee every step of the printing process to ensure that the quality of reproduction and duplication of color is precisely as he wants it.

"***The Sisterhood of Steel*** has a strong following from its previous incarnation from Epic Comics," adds Eclipse sales manager Jim Friel. "I expect it to sell very well initially and to have a strong, continuous sale afterwards."

Marx also continues to publish her personal newsletter ***Sands of the Sisterhood*** and is currently working on issue #9. Interested readers are welcome to send a letter of inquiry to C. Marx, Box 1952, Wrightwood, CA, 92397 or may send $1.00 for a sample issue.

The Sisterhood of Steel Graphic Novel ships July 28, 1987 and retails for $8.95 softcover; $14.95 hardcover; $24.95 signed & numbered hardcover.

What's Hot?

After a period of cooling off in the comics field, it looks like we're seeing the return of the hot book. Even more surprising, some of the hot titles are coming from the independent market, an area that some fans felt would never produce another hot title.

DC remains **the** hot publisher; their recent first issues have done very well, and ***Justice League #1***, ***Flash #1***, and ***Green Arrow: Last of the Longbow Hunters #1*** (first printing) are all very hot and are reported as steady sellers. A lot of people are very positive about the upcoming ***Doom Patrol*** series as well; look for demand on it to be high. This may very well increase the demand for ***Secret Origins Annual #1***, featuring John Byrnes retelling of the origins of the various incarnations of the Doom Patrol.

Marvel has one very hot title: ***The New***. The first printing of the first issue is escalating in price rapidly, and demand doesn't seem to be slowing down. Other high-demand hot titles are ***Punisher*** and ***Silver Surfer***, with the first issues of both fairly hot books.

First Comics has one extremely hot item: ***Lone Wolf and Cub #1***, first printing, is a very high-demand item. With three printings of the book scheduled, is that any surprise? The second issue is also a very brisk seller, and interest is very high in this book.

Eclipse has done very well with its three Japanese books, although it apears that ***Kamui #1*** is the hottest of all of the books, followed by ***Mai the Psychic Girl***. These books were all sellouts almost immediately, and that always bodes well.

From other publishers: ***Concrete #1*** is a very solid seller, generating heavy demand in most parts of the country—this one is likely to become hot because of a smaller print run and the extremely high quality of the book. ***Rotief #1*** from Mad Dog is also hot, for much the same reason; the quality on this title is very high, and fans are recongnizing that fact. ***Teen-Age Mutant Ninja Turtles*** remains very hot; prices on the early issues aren't escalating much any more (do they really need to get any higher?!), but new issues continue to sell extremely briskly, and demand is high for more recent back issues.

The summer should see a number of new hot titles debut; dozens of publishers have some very high-quality books coming up, and there's no doubt that several of them are going to catch on. The market retreated from its bullish stand on independents last sumsmer; look for independents to regain some of their lost ground this year, as more quality publishers move in to take up the slack where the more amateurish publishers have gone out of the comics business.

July's Hot Picks

Comic Shop News

July brings us several great projects; these are books well worth watching for. Traditionally, summer is the best time for comics, since many publishers release extra titles during the summer-time; this year is no exception.

DC's ***Doom Patrol*** (shipping 7/28) is the month's major release. This series was "previewed" in ***Secret Origins Annual #1***, which presented the origin of the earlier incarnations of the Doom Patrol. Now, the new series makes its appearance; remember how well Flash and Justice League did? This one could do better!

Cerebus #100 should be on the stands by the end of July as well. Cerebus remains one of the most popular independent titles; the strong artwork and very sophisticated storytelling of Dave Sim is the reason why. Readers who haven't picked up Cerebus in a while might want to start with this 100th issue.

Eclipse gives us a superb war book, ***Real War Stories***, presenting realistic war stories that do not set out to glorify the brutality of war. ***The 'Nam*** from Marvel has been very successful at this, and has become a fan favorite; look for ***Real War Stories*** to be grittier and more realistic still, and all 'Nam fans should be very pleased with this one, presenting some of the industry's best talents.

Marvel has a phenomenal ***Spider-man*** "mini-series" running throughout the month of July; this series features Spider-man vs. Kraven, who has taken his place to gain a better understanding of what sort of man Spider-man really is. The story's by J. Mark DeMatteis, and the artwork is a stunning combination of Mike Zeck's pencils and Bob McLeod's inks; the first two parts of this six-part story were some of June's best comics, and the remainder of the series looks even better! This series appears in every Spider-man title this month (except for the digest and Marvel Tales, which reprints earlier stories).

DC has a new ***Phantom Stranger*** mini-series appearing this month; the Mike Mignola/P. Craig Russell artwork is very impressive indeed, and this one should be a very hot mini-series for DC—a company that has become increasingly familiar with hot titles over the past few months.

Comico's ***Gumby Summer Fun Special*** from Comico deserves to be a major hit; the story's by Bob Burden, whose maniacal writing has made his own Flaming Carrot a cult favorite. The artwork's by Art Adams, one of the '80's hottest artists; the book's pure fun from beginning to end!

GUMBY BATMAN SURPRISE ATTACK!
NOW, GUMBY, YOU REMEMBER YOUR LITTLE ROBOT PLAYMATES, DON'T YOU--MEM, BUB AND MIBLET?
GUMBY!! GUMBY!!
HI, GUMBY!

"Gumby" Summer Fun Special © 1987 Comico

First Comics gives us a new hero title, ***Psychoblast***; this one, by Grant and Phipps, is a real change for First Comics, a company that currently has no superheroes as such set in this world.

Ocean Comics' ***Popeye*** looks to be more fun than we have any reason to expect; the book is very well-done, and the semi-realistic "origin story" approach to this ever-popular character should endear this one with newer fans and older fans as well.

Marvel's ***Thing/Hulk*** graphic novel from Jim Starlin and Berni Wrightson will undoubtedly be one of Marvels most popular graphic novels ever; remember how good Wrightson's Spider-man graphic novel looked? Well, this one looks even better! The name of the book is ***The Big Change***, and it's due to ship on July 21st.

Blood of Dracula #1 from Apple certainly deserves success; the book will focus on Dracula in three different eras, and the creative teams are top-notch. "Count Dracula" deals with the classic Dracula of the past, and is written by Rick Shanklin and illustrated by Neil Vokes and Mark Wheatley; "Death Dreams of Dracula" sets Dracula in modern times, and features a Shanklin script and John Workman artwork; "Dracula 2199" gives us a future Dracula in a world peopled by robots (script by Shanklin, art by Hempel, Willis, and Downs). If you think the vampire story is worn out, pick this one up—you'll be pleasantly surprised.

Powder is by Tim Truman and John K. Snyder III; this one looks very good, and the Truman storyline is sure to make this one popular with fans of Truman's other work for Eclipse.

Lone Wolf & Cub remains a sure bet for sheer entertainment; the reprints of the popular Japanese saga have quickly become the most popular Japanese reprint in America, and the Frank Miller covers certainly don't hurt.

Speed Racer remains one of the most fondly-remembered Japanese animation characters, and now NOW Comics brings it to comics shops in its own monthly title. This one is sure to be a hit!

Final Cycle #1 from Dragon's Teeth deserves success; they story by Mark Clegg and Charlie Boatner is very well-done, and the Frank Cirocco—Basilio Amaro artwork is outstanding. The book is a bargain at $3.50—it's some of Cirocco's best artwork ever.

Hulk #338 finishes the battle between the Hulk and X-Factor; Peter David's Hulk is a refreshing, dramatic change from the mindless brute who starred in the book for so many years, and this

AND SO, A LITTLE LATER...
WOW! THIS IS GREAT!
JUST REMEMBER, YOUNG SIR...ANY SUDDEN MOVEMENT YOU MAKE WILL BE AMPLIFIED BECAUSE WE ARE OUT OF THE SHIP'S FIELD OF...
ARRR!

© 1987 Comico

two-part storyline is a fine place to pick up on this title and see just how good the Hulk can be if he's written well—and Todd McFarlane's artwork is an added bonus.

Marv Wolfman's back on ***New Teen Titans***, and the improvement is immediate. Those of you who got away from this series because of sagging storylines might want to consider jumping back on with #37, which begins a new story; things are happening in this book again, and future plans look brighter than ever.

Tales of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles is a new title featuring Turtle adventures by other creators; considering the surefire success of almost any Turtles product, you won't want to pass this one by!

These are only a few highlights of a very solid comics month; be sure to keep an eye out for them over the next four weeks and give 'em a try!

DID YOU HEAR THAT? THEY SPEAK! THEY MAKE SOUNDS RECOGNIZABLE AS LANGUAGE!
YEAH, HE SAID "LET US TAKE YOU TO DINNER IN YOUR HONOR...AND FLAVOR."

From ***"The Final Cycle"*** Art by Chuck Beckum and Basilio Amaro © 1987 Mark Cleggs

Just What is a Skip Week?

Have you noticed that, from time to time, there are very few Marvels or DCs on your comics shop's stands when the new books arrive? As recently as the past couple of weeks, you may have noticed that only half as many Marvels as you had expected to see were there to greet you when you stopped by to pick up the week's new titles.

There's a simple explanation for it: skip weeks. The name is a little outdated now, since there are no skip weeks as such any longer—that is, neither Marvel nor DC actually "skips" releasing anything for a week like both companies used to do. Nonetheless, skip weeks do still exist, after a fashion.

How many weeks are in a year? Fifty two. How many titles of a monthly comic are published in a year? Twelve. However, if a monthly comic is shipped every four weeks, the publishers would have to put out thirteen issues a year of all their monthly titles. Rather than having no product released the last four weeks of the year, Marvel and DC choose to spread those weeks out so that a skip week occurs every three months.

For a long time, this meant that every three months, there was a week in which no Marvels were released. Soon after that, there was a week in which no DC's were released. (Since DC and Marvel each begin their shipping month on different weeks—Marvel begins on the first Tuesday of each month, and DC begins on the second Tuesday of each month—they never had the same skip week.) Some people saw this as a chance for their budgets to catch up with their comics habit, but others were very disappointed to find that none of their favorite titles came in that week. Skip weeks were usually very good for independent publishers whose product arrived on a skip week, however; they saw increased sales from comics fans who wanted something to read.

Now, Marvel and DC have both eliminated the skip week, but you can still see its effects. Every three months, when a skip week would occur, Marvel and DC spread one week's releases over a two-week period; generally, it would be the fourth shipping week from each company that gets split more-or-less in half and spread out. This way, you don't come in to your comics shop and find no Marvels or no DC's on a given week; instead, you find fewer titles than you might have expected.

Another factor that helped to end the skip week was the printing of comics at more than one location; with some books coming from Sparta and some books coming from Ronald's, this meant that Baxter books from Ronalds often made it into stores on weeks when no regular books were shipped from Sparta.

Those of you who were aggravated to find that some of your favorite titles weren't on the stands the week you expected to see them can see that this is beyond your local comics shop's control; this will continue to happen every three months until someone puts into effect a 48-week calendar. The next time it occurs, don't just say "nothing came in"; take a look at the dozens of other books that have arrived and see if you can't find something new to experiment with!

CSN Looks at comics

The Final Cycle* #1** proves that an independent book from a fairly new company can still be very well-done. This is a science-fiction story about the child of a human/alien relationship and his part in saving the vestiges of his alien race. It's a story of prejudice and of friendship; the writing by Mark Clegg and Charlie Boatner carries the story well. The book uses a few sf traditions that have become virtual cliches, but all in all, it's an above-average treatment of science fictional themes in comics (comics always seem to have had a problem with sf—once it developed beyond space opera, most comics weren't really sure how to deal with it). The artwork is excellent; Frank Cirocco is a superb stylist, using strong, minimal line and dynamic layout to make a story move very well across the page (his work on Epic's ***Alien Legion should be familiar to many of you who are having trouble placing him). Basilio Amaro's finishes are faithful to the Cirocco style, making the book as pleasing visually as it is in terms of plot. If you aren't buying many independents, maybe it's time to broaden your horizons—and this is a good place to start.

The six-part Spiderman-Kraven-Vermin storyline running through the three new ***Spider-man*** titles last month and this month didn't get as much publicity as they deserved because they were overshadowed by Spiderman's wedding—that's a shame, because this is some of the best Spiderman material that's appeared in years. I've always had a soft spot for Mike Zeck's artwork—he managed to combine lithe, fluid figures, superhero musculature, and moody, evocative backgrounds in ways few artists can, and Bob McLeod's inks show a great deal of respect for Zeck's pencils—he finishes out Zeck's work just about as well as John Beatty does, and that's quite a compliment, since I consider Zeck & Beatty a near-perfect art team. As for J.M DeMatteis's story—it develops Kraven's character far more than I ever expected, and the interplay between Vermin and Spider-man shows just how much effort DeMatteis has put into trying to develop each of these characters as a very different personality, motivated in differing ways. One person who's not going to get too much credit for this book, but certainly deserves recognition, is Rick Parker—his lettering for this series is as integral a part of the overall effect as the best Will Eisner art-lettering combinations. The third part of the storyline focuses on Kraven—it remains my personal favorite, simply because it shows what can be done with an older Marvel character I assumed was virtually worn out. The Spider-man wedding issue may have been a landmark issue, but I think this six-issue series will be much more memorable down the line.

I like Bullwinkle and his erstwhile companion Rocket J. Squirrel. I was wary when a Bullwindle comic was scheduled, however, because I didn't think anyone could handle the stories with the wit and sophistication of the original series. I'm glad to say that, for the most part, I was wrong. The first issue of Star's ***Bullwinkle and Rocky*** isn't as witty and sophisticated as the cartoon series, mind you—but it's much better than I ever expected it to be, and the book packs a lot into its fourteen page lead story. It's not as good as watching old episodes on videotape, but it **is** one of the best juvenile comics on the market, along with Gladstone's Disney material.

"One of the best juvenile comics on the market."

ATTENTION RETAILERS, FANS...

ANNOUNCING THE

Comic Shop News "Big Bucks Bonanza"

Here's the deal. Each week we'll run the name of some lucky reader who will receive a gift certificate for $25 to $50 good for anything where you get CSN! Just send your name & address and the name and address of this store to:
Comic Shop News
[illegible]
Marietta, GA 30066
We'll announce a new winner each week, so be sure to check every issue. PLUS, this fall we'll draw for a grand prize of a $500 gift certificate! Enter early and often!

Upcoming Comics Index

The following comics are scheduled for publication during July; when approximate ship dates are known, they are listed; otherwise, the books are simply listed as shipping in July. Many independent publishers are unable to indicate exactly when they will ship their products, and in some cases, books listed for shipping in July may not actually be released that month. Some publishers have been abbreviated in this form; **AardvVan** is Aardvark/Vanaheim; **Adventur** is Adventurers, **Blacktho** is Blackthorne; **ComInter** is Comics Interview; **Dragon's** is Dragon's Teeth; **Enterta** is Entertainment Comics; **Fantagra** is Fantagraphics; **KitchSnk** is Kitchen Sink; **PurImag** is Pure Imagination; **Tho/Imag** is Thoughts & Images. Release dates are approximate; Marvels and DC's are listed as releasing on Tuesdays, for example, but do not actually reach your comics shop until Thursday or Friday.

RELEASES FOR THE FIRST HALF OF JULY.

This listing gives title & number, (release date), publisher, price.

Action #593 (07/07), DC. .75
Action Force #17 (07), Marvel UK. $1
Action Force #18 (07), Marvel UK. $1
Adventurers #6 (07), Adventur $1.75
Airboy #25 (07/07) Eclipse $1.25
Aircel: Year One #1 (07), Aircel $6.95
Alpha Flight #52 (07/14), Marvel $1
Amazing Cynicalman #1 (07/07), Eclipse $1.50
Amazing Heroes #124 (07), Fantagra $2.50
Amazing Heroes #125 (07), Fantagra $2.50
Amazing Spiderman #294 (07/14), Marvel $.75
American Flagg #46 (07/07), First $1.75
Amethyst #1 (07/14), DC $1.25
Arcane Special #1 (07), Hot $1.75
Area 88 #3 (06/30), Eclipse $1.50
Area 88 #4 (07/14), Eclipse $1.50
Aristocrat X-Thieves #4 (07), ComInter $1.75
Art of Lou Fine #1 (06/30)c Ace $1.75
Avalon #6 (07), Harrier $1.95
Badger #29 (06/30), First $1.75
Battletech #1 (07), Hot $1.50
Best of Comics Scene #1 (07) Starlog $2.95
Best of Starlog #8 (07), Starlog $3.95
Blood of Dracula #2 (07) Apple $1.75
Bozo #3D (07), Blackthorne $2.50
Buce n Gar #3 (07), RAK $1.75
California Girls #2 (07/07), Eclipse $2
Captain America #335 (07/14), Marvel $.75
Captain Atom #8 (07/07), DC $.75
Captain Oblivion #1 (07), Harrier $1.95
Captain Thunder/BB #1 (07), Hero $1.95
Cases of Sherlock Ho #8 (06/30), Renegade $2
Centrifugal Bumble Puppy #2 (07), Fantagra $2.25
Cerebus #100 (07), AardvVan $1.70
Champions #2 (07), Hero $1.95
Comics Feature #59 (07), MPD $2.50
Comics Interview #46 (07), ComInter $2.50

KRAVEN!
SPIDER-MAN
Oh, I see now! I understand in a way I never could before. This costumed adventurer called Spider-Man is just that: a man.

A panel from *Spider-man #294* which continues the Kraven storyline by Demattis, Zeck & McLeod. © 1987 Marvel Comics

Comics Interview #47 (07), ComInter $2.50
Command Review #2 (07), Tho/Imag $4.00
Conan Reaver GN #1 (07/07), Marvel $6.50
Conan the King #43 (07/07) Marvel $1.25
Corum #6 (07/14) First $1.75
Cosmoneers #1 (07), Silverwolf $1.95
Crackbusters #3 (07), Showcase $1.95
Critters #18 (07), Fantagra $2.00
Crow of Bear Clan #6 (07), Blacktho $2.00
Dai Kamikaze #1 (06/30), NOW $1.50
Daredevil #248 (07/07), Marvel $.75
DArk Wolf #1 (07), Malibu $1.95
Deadface #3 (07), Harrier $1.95
Deadworld #4 (07), Arrow $1.50
Detective #579 (07/07), DC $.75
Detectives Inc. #1 (06/30), Eclipse $1.75
Dick Tracy Unprinted #1 (07), Blacktho $2.95
Doc Weird's Thrill Book #3 (07), PureImag $1.75
Donald Duck #259 (07/14) Glandstone $.95
DP Annual #1 (07/14), Marvel $1.25
Dragonring #8 (07), Aircel $2.00
Dreadstar #33 (07½07), First $1.75
Dynamo Joe #13 (07/14), First $1.75
Eagle #7 (07), Crystal $1.75
Eb'nn #8 (06/30), NOW $1.50
Eddy Current #1 (07), Mad Dog $2.00
Elf Warrior #3 (07), Adventur $1.95
Elflord #10 (07), Aircel $2.00
Elflord Book One #1 (07), Aircel $4.95
Elfquest Gatherum #1 (07), Apple $7.95
Eternity Smith #2 (07), Hero $1.95
Evangeline #4 (06/30), First $1.75
Fallen Angels #8 (07/14), Marvel $.75
Fantasci #8 (07), Apple $1.75
Fantasy Features #1 (07), AC $1.75
Final Cycle #1 (07) Dragon's $3.50
Firestorm #65 (07/14), DC $.75
Firestorm Annual #5 (06/30) DC $.75
Fish Police #10 (07), Fishwrap $1.50
Flaming Carrot #16 (06/30) Renegade $2.00
Flash #6 (07/14), DC $.75
Flinstones 3D #2 (07), Blacktho $2.50
Focus on Wallace Wood #1 (07) Fantagra $9.95
Four Color Mag #8 (07) Paragon $3.50
Frazetta's Untamed Love #1 (07), Enterta $2.00
French Ice #4 (06/30), Renegade $2.00
Fury #2 (07), Aircel $1.70
Fusion #4 (07/07), Eclipse $2.00
GI Mutants #2 (07/14), Eternity $1.95
Gizmo #7 (07), Mirage $1.50
Gods for Hire #7 (07), Hot $1.75
Gonad the Barbarian #1 (07), Eternity $1.95
Green Arrow: LongBow #3 (07/07), DC $2.95
Grimjack #40 (07/07), First $1.25
Grips #7 (07/07) RAK $1.50
Grips #5 (07), Silverwolf $1.50
Groo #33 (07/14), Marvel $1.00
Gumby 3-D #4 (07), Blacktho $2.50
Hamster Vice #10 (07), Blacktho $2.00
Hawkman #15 (06/30), DC $.75
He-Man the Movie #1 (07/14), Marvel $2
Headmasters #3 (07/14), Marvel $1.00
Hell Hounds #1 (07), Silverwolf $1.95
Hero Sandwich #5 (07), Slave Labor $1.50
Hotshots #4 (07), Hot $1.95
Hotspur #2 (07/14), Eclipse $1.50
Human Powerhouse #2 (07), PureImag $1.75
Icarus #4 (07), Aircel $1.70
Icon Devil #3 (07), Spider $1.60
Jack Hunter #1 (07) Blacktho $1.25
Johnny Gambit #4 (07), Hot $1.95
Journey: Wardrums #2 (07), Fantagra $1.75
Kamui #4 (07/07), Eclipse $1.50
Kirby's Heroes/Villains #1 (07), PureImag $5.00
Labor Force #8 (07), Blacktho $1.75
Legion SuperHeroes Annual #3 (06/30) DC $2.25
Libby Ellis #1 (07), Malibu $1.95
Libery Project #2 (07/07), Eclipse $1.50
Little Archie Digest #26 (06/30), Archie $1.35
Lockel #1 (07), Blacktho $1.25
Lone Wolf & Cub #3 (06/30), First $1.95
Lost Planet #2 (07/14), Eclipse $1.75
Mad Magazine #274 (07), Mad $1.35
Maelstrom #3 (07), Aircel $1.70
Mai Psychic Girl #4 (07/14), Eclipse $1.50
Male Call TPB #1 (07), KitchSnk $9.95
Man from UNCLE #4 (07), Enterta $1.50
MASK #9 (06/30), DC $.75
Max the Magnificent #2 (07), Slave Labor $1.50
Merc Annual #1 (07/07), Marvel $1.25
Mickey Mouse #232 (07/14) Gladstone $.94
Mister X #12 (07), Tru $2.25
Moebius GN #2 (07/14), Marvel $9.95
Mutt and Jeff #1 (07), Arcadia $8.95
Neat Stuff #8 (07), Fantagra $2.25
New Mutants #57 (07/07), Marvel $.75
Nexus #38 (06/30), First $1.75
Nightstreets #5 (07), Arrow $1.50
Ninja Elite #3 (07), Adventur $1.75
Omaha Cat Dancer #7 (07), KitchSnk $2.00
Omni Men #1 (07), Blacktho $1.25
Outcasts #2 (07/14), DC $1.75
Outpost Earth #1 (07), Megaton $1.50
Outposts #2(07), Blacktho $1.25
Outsiders #25 (07/14), DC $1.75
Overstreet Bulletin #3 (07), Overstreet $2.50
Particle Dreams #6 (07), Fantagra $2.25
Pellestar #1 (07/14), Eternity $1.95
Phantom Stranger #1 (06/30) DC $.75
Pirate Crops #1 (07/14), Eternity $1.95
Power Plays #2 (07), AC $1.75
Psi Force #13 (07/07), Marvel $.75
Psychoblast #1 (07/07), First $1.75
Puma Blues #8 (07), AardvVan $1.70
Ralph Snart #9 (06/30), NOW $1.50
Ramm #2 (07), Megaton $1.50
Rampage Alley #1 (07), StopDrag $1.75
Real War Stories #1 (07/14), Eclipse $2
Realm #9 (07), Arrow $1.50
Reid Fleming #3 (06/30), Eclipse $2.00
Renegade Romance #1 (06/30), Renegade $2.00
Return of Skyman #2 (06/30), Ace $1.75
Rick Raygun #6 (07), StodDrag $1.75
Robot Comics #0 (06/30) Renegade $2
Robotech Art 2 #2 (07), Donning $12.95
Ronin TPB #1 (06/30), DC $12.95
Rust #2 (07), NOW $1.50
Samurai #19 (07), Aircel $1.70
Samurai Book One #1 (07), Aircel $4.95
Savage Sword Conan #141 (07/14), Marvel $2.00
Scion #1 (07), Metro $2.00
Scout #21 (07/07), Eclipse $1.50
Sentinel #4 (07), Harrier $1.95
Shadow Blade #4 (07), Hot $1.95
Silent Invasion #8 (06/30) Renegade $2
Simon/Kirby Reader #1 (07), PureImag $1.75

Sinner Book 2 #2 (07), Fantagra $2.95
Sisterhood Steel GN #12 (07), Eclipse $8.95
Soldiers of Freedom #1 (07), AC $1.75
Southern Knights #21 (07), Comlnter $1.75
Spectre #7 (06/30), DC $1.00
Speed Racer #1 (06/30) NOW $1.50
Speed Racer #2 (07) NOW $1.50
Spiderman Digest #6 (07/14), Marvel $1.50
Spirit #33 (07), KitchSnk $2.00
Splat #3 (07), Mad Dog $2.00
Starlog #122 (07), Starlog $3.95
Stealth Force #1 (07), Malibu $1.95
Stephen Darklord #3 (07), RAK $1.75
Stig's Inferno #9 (07/14), Eclipse $2.00
Stinger #1 (07), Hot $1.75
Strange Tales #8 (07/14), Marvel $.75
Strikeforce:Morituri #12 (07/07), Marvel $1.00
Suicide Squad #6 (06/30), DC $.75
Sunrise #4 (07), Harrier $1.95
Superman IV Movie #1 (07/07) DC $2
Swamp Thing Annual #3 (07/07) DC $2
Syphons #6 (06/30), NOW $1.50
Tales of Beanworld #7 (07/14), Eclipse $2.00
Tales of Legion Annu #4 (07/07) DC $1.25
Tales of Teen Titans #83 (07/14) DC $1
Tales of Terror #13 (07/07), Eclipse $2.00
Tales of the Legion #352 (06/30) DC $.75
Tales of TMNT #2 (07), Mirage $1.50
Teen Titans Spotlight #15 (07/07), DC $.75
Teenage Mutant NinTu #5 (07), Mirage $1.50
Thundermace #4 (07/07) RAK $1.75
Thunderbunny #12 (07), Apple $1.75
Transit #3 (07), Vortex $1.75
Trollords #9 (07), Tru $1.50
Turtle Soup #1 (07), Mirage $1.50
Uncanny Man-Frog #1 (07), Mad Dog $2.00
Uncle Scrooge Digest #6 (07/07) Gladstone $1.50
Usagi Yojimbo #3 (07), Fantagra $2.00
Video Jack #1 (07/14), Marvel $1.25
Vigilante #47 (07/14) DC $1.50
Warlock 5 #8 (07), Aircel $1.70
Web of Spiderman #32 (07/07) Marvel $.75
West Coast Avengers #26 (07/07), Marvel $.75
Wham #1 (07), Hot $1.75
Who's Who Update #4 (07/14) DC $1.25
Wild Dog #3 (07/14) DC $.75
Wild Things #3 (07), Metro $2.00
Wildman #1 (07), Megaton $1.50
Wonder Woman #10 (07/14) DC $.75
World of Jughead #577 (06/30) Archie $.75
X-Men Annual #11 (07/07) Marvel $1.25
Zell #3 (07), Tho/Imag $2.00

From "Elementals" #16 ©1987 Comico

CSN Spotlight:

Contest Winner Becomes Marvel Artist

If you picked up *Nightmask #10* or *#12*, you might have noticed the artwork of Mark Bagley, an outstanding talent who has recently begun working for Marvel Comics. Mark will be illustrating Marvel's *Visionaries* series this month, as well. Mark isn't an artist who just appeared out of nowhere, however; his first real break came over two years ago, when Marvel first published its *Marvel Tryout Book*.

Some people refused to take the Marvel Tryout Book seriously when Marvel first unveiled its "you-may-be-our-next-discovery" project two years ago. A few even saw it as a way to make people pay for the privilege of submitting work to Marvel. Not Mark Bagley, however; Mark Bagley saw the tryout book as his chance to prove just what he could do as a penciller, and as a second shot at becoming a professional artist for Marvel Comics.

A second shot? "My first professional work was a story I did for Tom DeFalco three years ago; it was an inventory story, a Daredevil story that Marvel had me illustrate after having looked at samples of my artwork at a convention here in Atlanta. I felt great about that first story at the time; I thought I was ready to become a comics pro. I don't guess the people at Marvel agreed, though; the story was paid for, but Marvel never used it, and I never heard anything else about doing further work. I figured I had to try something else to show them just what I could do, and the Tryout Book was it," Bagley said.

Marvel received literally thousands of submissions from hopeful would-be-professionals awaiting discovery from their entry in the Marvel Tryout Competition. "I knew that there would be a lot of competition; I knew that a lot of people would send in material for the book. I didn't really think about how many people I'd be competing against; there was enough pressure just to illustrate the story. I didn't need to create even more pressure by worrying about how many others were mailing in entries. I don't think I really worried about the competition that much until I mailed the finished work in, and was afraid it would get lost in the shuffle somewhere. I **knew** it was good, I just didn't know if it was good enough to stand out from the other submissions."

Obviously, Marvel thought it was; weeks after submitting the tryout pages, Bagley received a phone call from Marvel Comics informing him that he had indeed won the pencilling competition. "At first I thought it was a joke," Mark said. "Then I realized that they were serious; there was no one else at home to tell! My wife was out for the evening, and I was at home alone after this great piece of news. I started calling people I knew; I had to tell somebody."

What did Mark feel had made the difference in his art for this submission? "The best thing that happened to my art, I think, was getting a job doing technical illustration for Lockheed, an aeronautics firm. I knew how to draw figures, I knew superheroes; I'd been reading that and drawing them for years and years, and I felt like I had that part under control. The illustrations at Lockheed made me more aware of design and perspective and helped my background a lot. I think that may have made the real difference. I'll bet that almost everyone who submitted art for the Tryout Competition drew very good heroic figures; that's the part that most everyone draws over and over again if they want to be a comics artist. I was the same way for a while; I'd draw the figure, but I wouldn't worry as much with the backgrounds and the page design. I think that's the difference."

The winners of the Tryout Book were each given their first professional assignments: to complete the Spiderman story done in that book. The book hasn't been put on Marvel's schedule yet. "It's frustrating, in a way," Mark said, "because I keep wanting to see my work in print at last, to be able to hand copies to friends and say 'I did this,' but I've had some work published since then, and I can already see just how much better I am now than I was when I did that story. I'm improving in quality and in speed, thanks to Marvel's giving me regular work as an artist; I even surprise myself."

"All things considered, it may be good that inventory story didn't get printed right away; I still think it's good, but I think what I'm doing right now is a lot better. In fact, if I ever heard that Marvel was going to publish that first story, I'd ask them to let me redraw it, just to show how much better I am now than I was when I first did it."

A lot of people may look on Mark Bagley's success as a lucky break; Mark agrees to an extent, but is quick to point out, "It wasn't like I just came out of nowhere, drew a few pages, sold them to Marvel, and was discovered. I've been submitting material for years now, and I've learned a few very hard lessons during my time doing submissions. The first thing I ever submitted was really great, I thought, and I was sure that once Marvel saw it, they'd love it. Unfortunately, I didn't know much about submitting artwork, so I mailed them all the original pages. To this day, I have no idea if anyone ever saw those pages, or if they got destroyed in the mail—I never got them back, though, and I didn't save any copies of them at all. I was new at all this and it really didn't occur to me that something might happen to the submission. I wish I had copies now, just to see what the material looked like."

Mark also adapted Jim Shooter's Avengers novel from a few years ago into comics form. "As it turned out, the same novel was adapted into an Avengers Annual later on; it was an Ultron story, and I believe George Perez did the art on that one. Anyway, I was really surprised when it came out, because I looked through the comic and realized that the published version was a lot like my adaptation, and in some cases the panels looked remarkably similar! To me, that meant that I must have been doing something right; this guy was a professional, and he had used a lot of the same visual approaches I had. After that, I kept on working, doing some stories of my own, just keeping in practice.

Mark has also drawn the first issue of *Mar Apocalypse*, released in June from Paragraphics. Right now, all his time is taken up with Visionaries, although he hopes to get caught up in the next couple of months and have time to work on an inventory story for the book that interests him most: *Spiderman*. "That's the character I really want to draw," Mark said.

LOOK OUT, KIDS! IT'S
ULTRAGUY & Joe POWER
FOR THE THOUSANDS OF YOU WHO DIDN'T READ THE FULL-LENGTH VERSION IN "TRUFAN ADVENTURES THEATRE #2, HERE'S A READER'S-DIGEST VERSION OF THEIR THRILLING ORIGIN!
---IT ALL BEGAN WHEN GUY SOLOMON III AND JOE McGINTNEY WENT SWIMMING WITHOUT WAITING A HALF-HOUR AFTER EATING, AND AS A RESULT, NO DOUBT, WERE STRUCK BY A STRAY BOLT OF COSMIC ENERGY!*
ZZZAP!
* WE'RE GOING FOR THE ROY THOMAS AWARD FOR LONGEST SENTENCE--! -WARD
OUR PALS DISCOVER THEY NOW POSSESS AMAZING SUPER-POWERS--!
WOW, PAL-- WE NOW POSSESS AMAZING SUPER-POWERS!
LIKE, DEJA VU--!
WITH SUCH AWESOME POWERS COME AWESOME RESPONSIBILITIES--
YOU KNOW, JOE-- WITH SUCH AWESOME POWERS COME---
NOW CUT THAT OUT!
SLAP
I'M GOING TO USE MY POWERS TO AID MANKIND, RIGHT WRONGS, AND FIGHT FOR TRUTH, JUSTICE, AND THE AMERICAN WAY!
HMM-MM...
I THINK I'LL MOVE TO HOLLYWOOD, BECOME FAMOUS, AND SCORE HEAVILY WITH THE BABES!
SO, ULTRAGUY REUNITES LOST PETS WITH THEIR OWNERS...
HERE YOU GO, LITTLE GIRL--!
UH, MY HOUSE IS THAT WAY--
ER-SCENIC ROUTE!
JOE POWER INTRODUCES CUTE SINGLE GIRLS TO "THE RIDE HOME"....
ULTRAGUY SAVES A VALLEY TOWNSHIP FROM A FLOOD--
SPLOOSH
IT'S A HOME RUN-- NO! WAIT! IT'S FALLING BACK IN THE FIELD OF PLAY!
VOOSH!
HEY!
--WHILE JOE POWER "SAVES" A TEAM HE'S BET ON HEAVILY... -- YOU GET THE PICTURE --!
NEW ADVENTURES & JOKES START NEXT WEEK!
©1987 by WARD BATTY
ART: Charlie WILLIAMS

Pied Piper expands line to 14 titles

Pied Piper Comics has announced an auspicious fourteen-title line-up for its releases this summer; six of the titles are related to David Lawrence's and Ron Lim's ***Ex-Mutants*** series, while eight of the titles are either new works or works based on earlier Pied Piper releases.

The Ex-Mutants form the base for the company's releases. David Campiti, an editor and co-creator of the series, said, "This series, perhaps because of the strangeness David Lawrence's scripts bring to it, has remained very popular through an otherwise painful black-and-white sluicing. Besides the regular book and a variety of color posters, we've developed an entire line of related series."

"Because the property is such a consistently strong seller, we can afford to shift all its related titles into a color format, probably by late summer or early fall," Mark Hamlin, co-publisher of Pied Piper, said. "It's also a nice 'bonus' for the creators who've supported us so strongly."

Lawnmen & Lim's Ex-Mutants is the major book in the series. It will be black-and-white to begin with, later becoming full-color; the 32-page book will be bi-monthly, and will be written by David Lawrence, and illustrated by Ron Lim and Tim Dzon.

The series returns in late June, after the several-month-long hiatus that has occurred since the publication of issue #5. The sixth issue, "Gods and Men," shows a different side to Doc Cugat. Issue seven takes the characters back to the biker town. This issue presents the return of Zack and other characters from the early issues, in preparation for the Wild Knights series due in July. With issue eight, the series goes full-color.

August should also bring the ***Lawnmen & Lim's Ex-Mutants Graphic Novel***, a $12.95, 108-page trade paperback reprinting the first four issues, plus sequences from the first Special Edition, plus brand-new material, all in full color. The book will contain some rewritten and redrawn material as well. It's being done in painted full colory by Ron Courtney.

There are also at least five one-shot issues planned in an Ex-Mutants micro-series. The series begins with ***Erin***, due in July, then will continue with ***Deiseld***, ***Vikki***, ***Angela***, and ***Lamia***. There may be other titles afterwards, but nothing is definite. The writing on these series will be by David Lawrence, David Campiti, and Scott Rockwell, with artwork by Ron Lim and inking by Tim Dzon and Chris Tsuda.

The ***Ex-Mutants Universe Files*** contains information on the characters, supporting characters, and background on the series. It was originally planned for black-and-white release, but it may be held until August and released in color instead.

The New Humans series was originally planned for late 1986 release; according to the publishers, the book has actually been drawn and inked twice, first by Gary Washington and York, then by Ron Lim and Chris Tsuda. The Lim/Tsuda version is the one finally used for the first issue. The book will continue with artwork by Shawn Atkinson and Chris Tsuda. The storyline deals with several humans who were put into suspended animation thirty years earlier, and are revived in the time of the Ex-Mutants. The feel of this book, especially after the first issue, is different from the parent title, as the characters globetrot through the U.S. and Europe. The book should go full-color with its third issue.

Rising Stars is an Ex-Mutants series featuring the writing and artwork of a variety of new talents. The first issue will begin with the previously-unprinted original version of New Humans #1.

The Wild Knights is written by Dennis Duarte, pencilled by Kevin VanHook; this is a bi-monthly ongoing series set to premiere later this summer. It will also cross over with Amazing Comics' Premieres' Untouchabots characters.

Finally, an Ex-Mutants pin-up book is expected sometime this summer as well.

As far as non-Ex-Mutants books, Pied Piper leads off with a full-color monthly ***Guest Warriors of Shanlo*** series, written by Peter Quinones, and illustrated by Glen Johnson and Bill Stancik. This series will pick up where the Pied Piper graphic novel of the same name left off. The first issue of the series will be black-and-white, but the book will go to color afterwards. The editor hints that an Ex-Mutants crossover is possible.

G.I. R.A.M.B.O.T. is a continuation of an earlier series from Wonder Comics; this one is written by Kevin Juatre, illustrated by Tom Lyle and others, and inked by Roy Richardson. Randy, also known as "Ran," is a man—America's best, in a private little war with the escalating concept of machines fighting out long-protracted aggressions. Can he make war what it "should" be—and with luck, do away with it altogether?

New Allies began late last year as a graphic novel, then the first issue of the on-going series came out in early 1987. Pied Piper plans to continue the hero-team series this summer with #2. This is not just a series with super-heroes slugging it out. "I keep hearing how hard it is to write ultra-powerful heroes, because no villain can beat them; that's ridiculous," comments David Campiti. "Since when did two grown men hitting one another become the be-all and end-all in writing? Victor is going to get more powerful, not less. Imagine if the only limitation to what you could do is what you believe you can do?" The book will be an ensemble title, focusing heavily on characterization.

The Lunatic Fringe, written by Scott Rockwell and David Lawrency; illustrated by John R. Statema and Bill Anderson, should begin in mid-summer. "This is a group that lives slightly at an angle to the world," explains series creator Scott Rockwell. "Finding they have superpowers and are bidden by a secret organization to fight crime and/or evil doesn't help much. But the money's good." The first issue will be an origin story to introduce readers to the somewhat bizarre feel of this title.

Ninja 'Stars will be a bi-monthly three-issue miniseries by Dennis Duarte and Allen Curtis. The book is about ninjas, sort of, but more about music, female wrestling, television, and intrigue. At press-time, Pied Piper is trying to get music clearance approval to use certain song lyrics in the storyline. Final story titles will depend upon those clearances. "All this," says editor Scott Rockwell, "and the destruction of Vanna White, too!"

Pied Piper Presents will be a showcase title featuring various concepts, writers, and artists. The first issue is planned for early fall. Fantasy, science fiction, and detective-mystery stories are all on line, including "Soulquest" by Peter Quinones, Glen Johnson, Jim Sinclair, and Marcus David; "Lavender Lace," a detective strip by Campiti, Lim, and Howard Feltman; and "Lords of the Galaxy," a four-part writers' round-robin. The final chapter of Roger McKenzie's Sun Runners could also appear here.

Power Factor will continue later this summer; the first issue was released early this year. The book will be written by Kevin Juatre, and the new art team will be Carmine Infantino and Doug Hazlewood. The series deals with a group of new costumed heroes who have come into being to fight a group of criminals who have systematically murdered their world's costumed heroes, or have forced them into retirement.

Transformers is a continuation of the earlier series; the book will be done by Peter Quinones, Kelley Jones, and Jim Sinclair. Pied Piper plans to release the third issue by July or August.

Marvel's Spellbound to be Bi-weekly

Marvel will offer its first bi-weekly comic book, ***Spellbound***, beginning in September of this year. The book is written by Louise Simonson and pencilled by Terry Shoemaker; Carl Potts is inking the project. The title will be a $1.50 on Baxter paper, 32 pages; the final issue will be a 48 page issue for $2.25. This is the first time Marvel has done any sort of a bi-weekly project; the book was initially begun years ago, under the working title of ***Transformers*** (before the toy tie-in book was ever begun), then was changed to ***Spellbinders*** (a title now used by Quality Comics) before it was finally put on the schedule as ***Spellbound***.